

A persuasive writing task can be one of the best forms of writing to choose in an exam. When you have learnt the tricks you can really persuade effectively and get the marks.

## PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

exaggeration	appeal to the head
invitation to think positively	appeal to the heart
assertion – a point of view expressed as fact	commands
use of appealing descriptive language	hard evidence (e.g. statistics)
addressing the reader directly	soft evidence (e.g. opinion)
appeal to the senses	incentive (e.g. rewards, offers)

### Features of effective persuasion – get the grade

If you are going to persuade someone to do something for you, buy your product, believe in your argument or donate money to a charity, you can try the following devices:

- ✓ Make it sound as if it is important. Explain what savings you will make, what wonderful things that you will get with it and what prizes you could win ...
- ✓ Appeal to their feelings and emotions: make them feel sympathy, empathy or feel guilty! If you are raising money for a charity make them feel guilty if they don't donate.
- ✓ Threaten them – tell the person what will happen if you don't get what you are asking for. Make it sound as though their doing what you want is crucial.
- ✓ Ask rhetorical questions – questions that don't actually require an answer, like 'Do you want all the children in school to suffer?', or 'Can you really live without this marvellous pen?'
- ✓ Make use of three-part lists – three reasons, three benefits, three emotive words.
- ✓ Give your audience strong statements of belief = then go on to justify and expand on your ideas.
- ✓ Use strong adjectives ('best', 'most important', 'stunning') and verbs ('will', 'need', 'must', 'should', 'could').
- ✓ Use the first person ('I' / 'We') to make your writing strong and personal; use the second person ('You') to involve your audience.
- ✓ Show, where appropriate, that you can employ formal language. Organise your writing in paragraphs (or use other appropriate structural devices) and link ideas by connectives = however, although, whereas.

## YOU MIGHT BE ASKED TO WRITE A SPEECH

Remember that speeches are meant to be spoken aloud to an audience.

1. The most important thing is to have something interesting to say. Work out your ideas in a plan before you write the speech. A plan will also allow you to structure ideas and to organise what you have to say.
2. Be aware of the audience by speaking to them directly. Use the words 'you', 'your', 'we', 'our' and 'us' to get them involved.
3. Start off with a clear introduction. Introduce yourself and your subject. Try to grab the audience's attention straight away.
4. Set out the points that you want to make. People's brains cope best with information that is presented in clear 'parcels'.
5. Use rhetorical questions – ask the audience questions that do not need to be answered to make them think.
6. Use information to support your ideas. **Don't** just keep saying 'I THINK'. Explain what you believe and why.
7. Come up with memorable phrases or a slogan. Give the audience something easy to remember that recaps your points.
8. Try to use humour – making the audience laugh will wake them up and perhaps make them like and support you.
9. Language – devices like alliteration, metaphor and simile can be used to create more powerful effects and visual images in the minds of the audience.
10. Strong conclusion – end your speech with a summary that will fix your ideas firmly in the audience's mind. Remember that this will be the last thing that the examiner marks.

**Good luck!**

**CHECK LIST**

**PALL** helps you to identify the **purpose, audience, language** and **layout** of a text. Use it to help you plan your writing.

Purpose	What are you trying to get your audience to do / think / feel?	
Audience	Who is your text aimed at?	
Language	Which of the following persuasive features can you incorporate? –	
	• adjectives to describe	
	• alliteration	
	• appeal to the head	
	• appeal to the heart	
	• appeal to the senses	
	• benefits	
	• commands	
	• emotional words to get you to feel	
	• exaggeration	
	• hard evidence – statistics	
	• soft evidence – opinions	
	• informal or formal	
	• positives	
	• repetition	
	• rhetorical questions	
	• rule of three	
	• slogans or catch phrases	
	• statements	
	• using the words ‘we’ or ‘you’ or ‘our’	
	• different length sentences – short and long	
	• verbs – powerful to tell you what to do	
Layout	Think about paragraphs / headings / sections / bullet points / boxes. Structuring your ideas will help you to get the marks you deserve. Make sure the structure you choose is appropriate for the form you are writing in.	

**Learn and revise this check list.  
It will help you get the grade when writing a persuasive text.**